

means if the keys are the same for returning an indication that the previously-retrieved copy of the item of data is consistent or if the keys are different for reading from the database and returning a copy of the item of data.

- 5 6. A database index, wherein at least one index entry in the index includes at least:
least:
identity information for identifying an item of information in the database;
location information for indicating the location in the database of the item
of information; and
10 version information which changes each time the respective information in the database changes.